

Local Area Network (LAN), a Wireless Access Network (WAN), a 3<sup>rd</sup> party network, and the like. The access networks **101** and **108** may be either directly connected to NEs **109** and **111** of the IMS core network **110**, or indirectly through another network.

**[0017]** Some NEs (e.g., NEs **109** and **111**) reside at the edge of the IMS core infrastructure and interface with customer endpoints over various types of access networks. An NE that resides at the edge of a core infrastructure is typically implemented as an edge router, a media gateway, a proxy server, a border element, a firewall, a switch, and the like. An NE may also reside within the network (e.g., NEs **118-120**) and may be used as a SIP server, a core router, or like device.

**[0018]** The IMS core network **110** also comprises a Home Subscriber Server (HSS) **127**, a Serving-Call Session Control Function (S-CSCF) **121**, a Media Server **125**, and an Application Server **112** that contains a database **115**. An HSS **127** refers to a network element residing in the control plane of the IMS network that acts as a central repository of all customer specific authorizations, service profiles, preferences, etc.

**[0019]** The S-CSCF **121** resides within the IMS core infrastructure and is connected to various network elements (e.g., NEs **109** and **111**) using the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) over the underlying IMS based core backbone network **110**. The S-CSCF **121** may be implemented to register users and to provide various services (e.g., VoIP services). The S-CSCF interacts with the appropriate VoIP/SoIP service related applications servers (e.g., **112**) when necessary. The S-CSCF **121** performs routing and maintains session timers. The S-CSCF may also interrogate an HSS to retrieve authorization, service information, user profiles, etc. In order to complete a call that requires certain service specific features, the S-CSCF may need to interact with various application servers (e.g., various VoIP servers). For example, the S-CSCF may need to interact with another server for translation of an E.164 voice network address into an IP address, and so on.

**[0020]** The Media Server (MS) **125** is a special server that typically handles and terminates media streams to provide services such as announcements, bridges, and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) messages for VoIP service applications. The MS **125** also interacts with customers for media session management to accomplish tasks such as process requests.

**[0021]** The application server **112** may comprise any server or computer that is well known in the art, and the database **115** may be any type of electronic collection of data that is also well known in the art. In one embodiment, the application server **112** may comprise an event-share server that is configured to support and enable collaborative media sharing among users, e.g., at an event (e.g., to create and maintain one or more event-share groups). Accordingly, in one embodiment the database **115** may store event-share media and tags to support and enable collaborative media sharing among users, e.g., at an event, as discussed in greater detail below. Those skilled in the art will realize that the communication system **100** may be expanded by including additional endpoint devices, access networks, network elements, application servers, etc. without altering the scope of the present disclosure.

**[0022]** The above IP network is only described to provide an illustrative environment in which packets for voice, data and/or multimedia services are transmitted on networks. In one embodiment, the current disclosure discloses a method and system for supporting and enabling collaborative media

sharing among users, e.g., attending an event via an exemplary communication network (e.g., an IMS core network) as illustrated in FIG. 1 and as further described below.

**[0023]** FIG. 2 illustrates a flowchart of a method **200** for supporting and enabling collaborative media sharing among users, e.g., at an event. In one embodiment, one or more steps of the method **200** can be performed by one or more of the components of IMS core network **110**. For example, in one embodiment one or more steps of the method **200** can be implemented by S-CSCF **121** or an event-share server such as AS **112**. The method begins in step **205** and proceeds to step **210**.

**[0024]** At step **210**, the method creates at least one event-share group for an event. For example, a network provider may provide an event-share service feature which is a feature that permits users who have subscribed to the feature to participate in temporary event-share groups for sharing media with other users who are members of the same temporary group.

**[0025]** For example, a user may be attending a child's soccer game and would like to participate in event media sharing for that game (i.e., the "event") using his or her mobile endpoint device (e.g., a cellular phone, a mobile phone, a smart phone, and the like). Accordingly, the method may receive a request from the user (e.g., via his or her mobile endpoint device) to participate in an event-share group for the soccer game. In one embodiment, the method first verifies or confirms that the user has subscribed to an event-share service feature. If not, the request is denied. On the other hand, if the method determines that the user has subscribed to the event-share service feature, the method may determine if the user is the first user requesting to participate in an event-share group for the particular event. In one embodiment, if the method determines that the user is the first user requesting to participate in an event share group for a particular event, the method creates a new event-share group with the requesting user being the first member. Alternatively, organizers of an event such as a major sporting event or concerts may provide advance notice of the event and the method may automatically set-up an event-share group for the event. Various other scenarios and mechanisms for creating a new event-share group are possible and are within the scope of the present disclosure.

**[0026]** Regardless of the manner in which an event-share group is created, the method **200** proceeds to step **220** where the method assigns an event tag to the event and/or event-share group for use by members of the event-share group. The event tag may comprise any identifier that is attached to or stored with media that uniquely identifies the media as being related to a particular event and/or event-share group. In this manner, media that is tagged with the particular event tag (e.g., the event tag is attached to or stored with the media) can be easily identified as media belonging to a particular event, and/or event-share group. In one embodiment, an event tag may comprise access type information on a picture, or correlated type information that is stored with a media file, such as a video. In one embodiment, an event tag may comprise watermarking type information on the media itself that could be encoded in, and transmitted with the media itself, or alongside the media. Alternatively, an event tag could be simply a text tag that is stored in an access file along with the media. In one embodiment, the event tag may be hidden information in a picture that may be detected by the method and made available to other systems. In the case of music or audio files,